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tapol
The Indonesia Human Rights Campaign
111 Northwood Road, Thornton Heath, Surrey CR7 8HW, UK
Telephone 081 771 2904, Fax 081 653 0322

Honorary President:
Lord Avebury
Honorary Treasurer:
Tom Soper
Organising Secretary:
Carmel Budiardjo

More massacre victims die in Dili
Worldwide calls for an independent inquiry

Sources in Dili told TAPOL today that five of the people wounded during the massacre at the Santa Cruz cemetery in Dili yesterday have died in hospital. Altogether 45 seriously injured people were taken to the Dili General Hospital, though many more with serious wounds were refused admittance. Access to the hospital is being denied to relatives.

The bodies of the sixty people who were killed when Indonesian troops opened fire on unarmed people at the cemetery have been taken to an unknown place for mass burial. Families inquiring about dead relatives have been warned by the army 'not to look for the bodies'.

A New Zealander, Kamal Bana Dhaj, one of several foreign journalists who were beaten and shot during the massacre, died in Dili Hospital last night.

Several people who were rounded up after the massacre and taken to *Kodim*, the district military command, are believed to have been knifed to death. Of the 200 or so people who were taken to *Polwil*, the Dili police headquarters, more than a hundred are still in custody. All were stripped naked and subjected to torture and beatings. The hospital, *Kodim* and *Polwil*, are all surrounded by troops with no-one being allowed in.

The atmosphere in Dili is described as one of great fear, with troops strutting the streets, making their presence felt everywhere. But there is widespread anger at yesterday's atrocity perpetrated by the occupying forces and Timorese could seek ways to manifest their intense hatred for the Indonesian army, regardless of the risks.

Our sources strongly deny claims by the Indonesian army that people in the procession were armed. It was a peaceful, solemn event to commemorate the dead.

The massacre happened while the UN Special Rapporteur on Torture, Professor Kooijmans was in Dili, preparing to carry out an investigation for the UN Human Rights Centre in Geneva. Besides the Timorese who went on the procession to the cemetery, others went to his hotel hoping to speak to him, but the hotel was surrounded by hundreds of troops. It is understood that Professor Kooijmans has cut short his visit and is now back in Jakarta.

The massacre occurred early on Tuesday, 12 November, when troops opened fire on a large procession of people going to the cemetery to pay their respects to a Timorese, Sebastiao Gomes, who was shot dead on 28 October at Motael Church. The church has been giving sanctuary to Timorese youths fearing arrest for several years.

Priests in Dili are prevented from making contact with the outside as their phones have been disconnected. No-one has been able to speak to Bishop Belo, Apostolic Administrator of East Timor, for several weeks. It is now known that he refused to attend a meeting of the Indonesian Bishops' Annual Conference this month because of the unprovoked attack on Motael Church and the murder of Gomes.

Faced with the enormity of this latest atrocity, Western governments are now condemning the Indonesian authorities. The US and Australian governments who for years turned their eyes away from the sufferings of the Timorese, have denounced the incident and called for an independent inquiry. The UN Secretary-General has issued a denunciation. The British Government has today summoned the Indonesian ambassador to the Foreign Office "to find out more" about "reports of shootings in Dili". The Portuguese government issued a statement today "condemning this new massive violation of human rights" and calling on all states and organisations to exert pressure on the Indonesian government to end its illegal occupation of East Timor". It also demands "an impartial, thorough and internationally supervised investigation of this highly regrettable incident".

Such widespread condemnation has shattered the credibility of Indonesian claims that conditions in East Timor are tranquil. Its policy of "openness" has been thrown into confusion, especially with foreign journalists (those who survived), themselves victims of the violence, testifying as eye-witnesses to an act of unbridled brutality. Indonesia's diplomatic offensive which was to have been crowned by the possible election of Foreign Minister Ali Alatas as UN Secretary-General is now a shambles.

The admission by the General Try Sutrisno, commander-in-chief of the armed forces, that fifty people were killed and his announcement in Jakarta today that an inquiry will be held - an internal inquiry that will convince no-one - shows the regime to be, for the first time, on the defensive about its policy in East Timor.

Sources in Jakarta say that the massacre may have been perpetrated by the army in Dili as a challenge to President Suharto, who is known to be at loggerheads with many senior and middle-ranking army officers. It is a tragedy for the East Timorese that they have become the innocent and defenceless victims of a power struggle in Jakarta.

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